SECTION I
NEW APPROACHES TO FASHION AND EMOTION

THE CIVILIZATION OF FASHION: AT THE ORIGINS OF A WESTERN SOCIAL INSTITUTION

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1. Introduction

The coming of fashion created a new world, in which a passion for novelty, combined with rapid changes in taste, interrupted a tradition of well-established habits in ways of dressing and the significance attributed to clothing. It is customary to distinguish between societies in which dress style was not subject to frequent cyclical change, and those where, in contrast, rapid changes in clothing styles were the rule; in the former case we speak of 'costume', while in reference to the latter, the term 'fashion' is introduced.[1] The rise of fashion represents a turning point in the history of human societies, in that it introduced to the social structure a new system of values,[2] able to condition the behaviour of the actors, both as regards individual choice, and strategies adopted by economic organisations. On the basis of the well-grounded considerations put forward by social scientists, fashion can be considered as a social institution which regulates the alternation of cyclical changes in dress styles, overcoming the previous regulation based on ascribed principles.[3] Fashion can also be considered as a system of rules in which sanctions are applied by expression of disapproval, ridicule and ostracism.[4] This assumption implies two essential elements: the first is constant change in styles, whether fast or slow, while the second is an individual's power to follow these changes without institutional restrictions.[5] It can thus be maintained that the 'fashion phenomenon' was present, to a greater or lesser extent, in those societies in which these two elements were to be found. Needless to say, it was not a sudden or quick transition, but rather a gradual, progressive but irreversible change. The question is therefore to ascertain the period in which this process of transformation was begun. Mary Stella Newton has no doubt that the years around 1350 marked the introduction of innovations in hairstyles, footwear and especially dress styles:[6] indeed, there was a shift from the same styles used for both men's and women's clothing to a clear distinction between the sexes. Clothing changed from loose draped robes to close-fitting garments, thanks to a series of changes in the cut and the widespread adoption of fastenings secured with buttons. The introduction of these innovations then opened the way to an evolution characterised by cyclical changes in taste as regards clothing, involving areas of Flanders, France, England and Italy during the second half of the fourteenth century. The comments of contemporaries identified the new way of dressing with uncontrolled extravagance and wealth, which like

an irresistible wave swept over the society of the time, putting old plain habits at risk, and with them, some feared, the political and social order.[7] The barbed comments of the moralists were especially directed towards those elements of clothing considered most indecent, such as the very short men's tunics or close-fitting women's dresses popular in the second half of the fourteenth century.[8] According to observers, the distinguishing feature of the style of the period was a desire for unrestrained ostentation combined with brazen shamelessness.

While accepting the theory that the fourteenth century was the watershed between a period in which clothing followed traditional dress styles, and one where the speed of change accelerated,[9] it remains to be seen up to what point the changes involved society as a whole. Certainly, it is likely that the transformations in styles after 1350 influenced the whole dress code system of the time to some extent, including even the lower classes. This contention is confirmed in many accounts, particularly those referring to England.[10] However, it seems risky to deduce that such behaviour was indicative of a common trend.[11] If true, it would point to a transformation of the social order, necessarily sustained by significant changes in demand—or, at least, in supply and the availability of cheaper goods—or possibly both.[12] General references to the crisis of the feudal system and the rise of the merchant classes as the vanguard of a developing bourgeois class, often cited to support and explain the fourteenth-century changes in dress taste, are vague at best. The most disctinctive general feature during the fourteenth century was the role of state intervention, intervention which became more frequent than in the past, with the enactment of sumptuary laws aimed at careful regulation of clothing.[13] It may be that this unusual legislative zeal was to some extent stimulated by social mobility, together with the adoption of consumer habits till then reserved for the higher classes, changes which developed within the framework of social transformation in the years following the crisis of the Black Death. Again, however, it is difficult to accept the idea that these conditions were general. Alan Hunt holds that the increased use of sumptuary law in the fourteenth century can be explained as a need to "metabolise" the changes introduced into the dress code, linking them specifically to society's need for representation.[14] In other words, sumptuary legislation of the time did not aim to tighten up social hierarchy, limiting the lower classes' freedom to adopt new appearance strategies, but rather to reclassify the outward signs of social status in accordance with new ways of dressing.

The close-fitting clothes, short tunics, shoes with long points, and eccentric and complex hairstyles introduced during the fourteenth century, revitalised the yearning for more refined self-presentation; in sharp contrast with the past, the coming of fitted styles, drew attention to the figure, rather than merely draping the body. However, these significant new aspects existed side-by-side with factors suggesting continuity with some of society's pre-existing elements, such as the close relationship between clothing on the one hand and wealth and conspicuous consumption on the other. This fact suggests that the possibility of expressing one's own taste in clothing was still to a great extent limited to the narrow circle of the social elite, with the careful strategy of appearance defined precisely by one's social class. Furthermore, although it was during the fourteenth century that cyclical changes in dress style first occurred, the tempo seems rather slow to modern observers. Overall the innovations introduced about 1350

represent an important turning point in the process of the development of fashion; indeed, it seems to me correct to consider the coming of fashion as a social institution as being similar to a process which unwinds over time not steadily, but rather with periods of acceleration followed by others of stasis necessary to society for "metabolising" the changes, as described above. In this type of evolution, tradition survives together with innovation for a long time; but at each successive cycle of change the habit of resistance was reduced.

The innovations which emerged in the mid-fourteenth century therefore represent an important but not decisive turning point, given that there were still a series of institutional factors which limited clothing to a circumscribed role of representation and identification: dress was a direct expression of one's social class, thus inhibiting the deployment of what Simmel has identified as one of the most typical features of fashion: imitation.[15]

2. Social hierarchies and hierarchies of appearance

At least until the sixteenth century, clothing continued to be considered a largely accurate indicator of social class and/or ethnic group, as well as marking age, profession, and of course sex; social hierarchies were faithfully reflected in hierarchies of appearance.[16] Sixteenth-century treatises, whether providing moral and behavioural guidance or dealing with political and social topics, dedicated careful reflection on clothing and its social function, highlighting the close link between dress and social status.[17] Giovanni Della Casa, author of the successful treatise on good manners *Galateo*,[18] exemplified this when he wrote: "The article of clothing, whatever it may be, should fit the person and suit him or her, so that it does not seem that you are wearing someone else's clothes, and especially should be suited to your social station, so that a priest is not dressed as a soldier, and a soldier as a juggler."[19] He was echoed in Spain by the *arbitrista* Pedro Fernàndez Navarrete, who declared that "*es justo que los trajes de los nobles se diferencien de los que han de permitirse a los plebeyos*."[20] Michel de Montaigne, perspicacious commentator of the fashions of his time, revealed: "I observe much greater distance betwixt my habit and that of one of our country boors, than betwixt his and that of a man who has no other covering but his skin."[21] The main characters of the well-known dialogue by Baldassarre Castiglione in *Il cortegiano*[22] devoted sharp and cogent comments to the issue of dress, as when Master Federico argued how the courtier "ought to determine with himselfe what he will appeere to be, and in suche sorte as he desireth to bee esteamed so to apparaile himselfe, and make his garmentes helpe him to be counted suche a one, even of them that heare hym not speake, nor see him doe anye maner thyng."[23]

A particular style of dress was determined not only by the social status of the wearer, but also by the specific traditions established in various communities, which he or she had to observe. Thus, for example, in *Il cortegiano* mention is made of the typical characteristics of Florentine and Venetian apparel, and the excesses of French and German styles of dressing are criticised, while the lack of an Italian style is bemoaned.[24] Frequent calls are made to avoid standing out from what is normal with eccentric or showy clothing,[25] warnings which are repeated in Baldassarre Castiglione's work: "But I wyll not enter into communi-

cation of sorowe: therefor it shalbe wel to speake of the raiment of our Courtyer, the whiche so it be not out of use, nor contrary to his profession."[26] This attitude must have been acknowledged in Britain too, if in *Hamlet* Polonius offers Laertes the following advice on the latter's departure: "Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,/But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;/For the apparel oft proclaims the man,/And they in France of the best rank and station/Are most select and generous, chief in that."[27]

That clothing was considered a means of communication and of establishing social status is also witnessed by the success of illustrated treatises on dress, offering full-blown exhibitions of costumes, fashion shows on paper divided by the geographical area, sex, age, and of course the social status of the wearer.[28] In 1568 Jost Amman published the *Book of Orders* (*Ständebuche*), with etchings showing jobs and activities of the time, classifying them into social groups and with a preface which stated: "Everyone must stay in the situation, profession or manual trade where God has placed him and accept his fate, considering that the poorest of men is under the eye of his divine majesty."[29] It is probable that one of the reasons for the success of these publications was the curiosity regarding the habits and customs of distant populations, roused by geographical discoveries; but I believe another equally important motivation is to be found in the interest shown for those volumes offering an illustrated catalogue of social hierarchies. The high point of these treatises is probably represented by Cesare Vecellio's *Habiti antichi e moderni di tutto il mondo*, published in Venice at the end of the 16th century,[30] an illustrated catwalk including dress habits from different areas, which both Giovanni Della Casa and Baldassar Castiglione advised adopting to avoid seeming rude or disrespectful. The taxonomic criteria used are multiple: peasants and commoners are shown together with duchesses and noblewomen, cut-throats and convicts alternate with barons and merchants; clothes for wearing at home alternate with those to wear in public, the clothing of magistrates is distinguished from that of solders, porters, plague buriers, the 'shameful poor'; young men are differentiated from their elders and young girls from married women. The commitment to classifying the 'hierarchy of appearances' clearly and incontrovertibly goes as far as to include the peoples of recently-discovered lands overseas:[31] book XII of this work is devoted to America, and contains descriptions of the clothes of Peruvians, Mexicans, Virginians and people of Florida, divided by sex, age and social status of the wearer, all of course within a taxonomy which would be understandable to a European reader.[32]

Vecellio's work also contains some interesting notes to explain the pictures, which reveal the attention the author paid to the speed of change in dress styles. For example, one of the pictures is described as follows: "Historical Roman dress for woman, which was worn all over Italy. At around one thousand years after the birth of our Lord I find the above dress used in Rome and throughout Italy."[33] Here is another comment made with reference to female dress in Rome: "Roman noblewoman's dress from two hundred years ago. I find this dress used by Roman women and throughout Italy in about 1300, and it is almost the same as those of today."[34] From these brief citations from Vercellio's work—and especially from the latter—one gains the impression that "up-to-date" and "antiquity" were indeed categories amongst those the author bore in mind when analysing dress

types, but his dating seems to be rather loose: the clothes from a century before did not seem too old-fashioned to him.[35] On the other hand, Giovanni della Casa also cautioned prudence in the adoption of radical changes in dress styles and warned against the temptation of being a forerunner in adopting new ideas, i.e. one of those whom marketing experts call 'innovative' or 'pioneer' consumers; his opinion of changes in dress styles did not leave much room for fashion: "It is best that your clothes are like those of others of your time and station, for the reasons I have given above, because we do not have the power to change habits as we wish, but time creates them, and time also destroys them."[36]

The hierarchy of appearance was reflected in a hierarchy of colours, which contributed decisively to the identification of the social status of the wearer. Michel Pastoureau has provided us with the fascinating story of the ups and downs of striped[37] and blue[38] fabric, as well as the symbolism of these two variants. However, it was black which dominated the clothing, especially male, of the higher social ranks; dark clothes permitted the immediate identification of gentlemen of the modern age. Although the history of black has ancient roots, it is believed that the acceptance of black dress as the aristocratic norm took place during the fifteenth century, owing to the influence of Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy,[39] and that this style then spread from the Burgundy court to the rest of Europe.[40] Baldassar Castiglione confirmed the final success of black, judging it the colour most suited to the perfect courtier: "Truth it is, that I woulde love it the better yf it were not extreme in anye part, as the Frenchman is wont to bee sometyme over longe, and the Dutchmanne overshorte, but as they are bothe the one and the other amended and broughte into better frame by the Italians. Moreover I will houlde alwayes with it, yf it bee rather somewhat grave and auncient, then garishe. Therefore me thinke a blacke colour hath a better grace in garmentes then any other, and though not throughly blacke, yet somwhat darke, and this I meane for his ordinary apparaile . . . But in the rest I coulde wishe they should declare the solemnitie that the Spanyshe nation muche observeth, for outwarde matters manye times are a token of the inwarde."[41] Black became a synonym for elegance and was accepted as such during the 16th century partly because, as Castiglione revealed, it was identified with the style of the dominant nation of the period, Spain.[42] However, the spread of black clothing went far beyond the boundaries of the area under Spanish influence, reaching England and Holland,[43] because it was associated with the gifts of piety, seriousness, solemnity, authority.[44] Ludovico Dolce, author of *Dialogo dei colori,* published in 1565 in Venice—the city which had adopted black clothes as the 'uniform' of its patricians before those of Burgundy and Spain—wrote thus of black: "Which colour, besides having something virile and temperate, shows likewise firmness, because this colour can not change to another."[45]

The many sumptuary laws enacted in the different European states are evidence of the effort put into regulating 'appearances' according to social hierarchies; the laws enacted in the early modern age paid increasing attention to regulating dress and accessories as attributes denoting social status, gradually dropping intervention in such matters as funerals, weddings and food.[46] Doubtless one can discuss up to what point the sumptuary laws were effective or whether instead their repetition did not rather indicate a sign of their ineffectiveness,[47] but during at least the 1500s the legislation was employed with renewed vigour.[48]

The motivations driving the activity of those with political power to attempt the regulation of consumption were many and varied over time. However, during the sixteenth century the legislators' attention seems to have been focused on limiting the considerable expense noble families bore for 'conspicuous consumption', as well as on the mercantilist need to restrict the purchase of imported goods, but most especially on the control of appearances.[49]

Thus, for example, in 1551 thirteen gentlemen of Mantua sent the Lord of Mantua a letter of complaint against a sumptuary law which did not give sufficient weight to social differences, arguing their case as follows: "If we must observe rank, we fail to see why (be it said without ambition) the merchant should not be at least distinguished from the gentleman and the villein from the nobleman. It seems strange to us that our reputation, obtained through the virtues of our ancestors and maintained for us with great fatigue and expense . . . should now be thus offended that, having to distinguish, we are considered at the same level as the lowermost and meanest people in this city."[50] One the aims of sumptuary legislation was to protect the lower nobility from ruin from the exorbitant expenditure necessary for maintaining a standard of living suited to the *status*.[51] This risk was also perceived by Annibale Romei, a gentleman from Ferrara, who in a work published in 1591, noted that "men by nature are so vain and ambitious, that the common people strive to compete in dressing so as to seem to be nobles, and the nobles so as to seem to be princes, not paying attention to anything apart from outward appearance, they do not worry about being beggars at home as long as they seem rich when they are out."[52]

Montaigne maintained that the purpose of the sumptuary laws was precisely "to regulate idle and vain expenses in meat and clothes,"[53] but that the means was not suited to the end, in that, as he observed: "For to enact that none but princes shall eat turbot, shall wear velvet or gold lace, and interdict these things to the people, what is it but to bring them into a greater esteem, and to set every one more agog to eat and wear them?"[54] To limit the otherwise uncontrollable desire to emulate, and moreover recognising the necessity "of exterior distinction of quality (which, truly, I conceive to be very requisite in a state)," Montaigne suggested: "Let kings but lead the dance and begin to leave off this expense, and in a month the business will be done throughout the kingdom, without edict or ordinance; we shall all follow."[55] A solution to the problem of effectively combining the need for showing difference with the reduction of expenditure was formulated by a gentleman from Lucca, Nicolao Guinigi, who in 1581 presented to the "*Consiglio dei Sessanta Decurioni*" of Milan a proposal which seems to have been inspired by Montaigne's considerations; the idea was to forbid the use of precious fabrics and expensive jewellery to all, without exception, introducing a heron's feather as the sole distinguishing feature, to be worn only by the nobles of the state of Milan.[56]

The discussions of essayists on the morphology and the chromatic scales of appearances, debate on the sumptuary laws, and proposals for the renewal of this legislative tool, as well as Vercellio's efforts at classification, seem to bear witness to an attempt, expressed at different levels and with varying intensity, at reshaping, without overthrowing, the accepted taxonomy of appearance, with the aim of absorbing smoothly the trend towards change which was under way. Cesare Vecellio's 1598 work was probably the most accomplished and mature

effort at representing the social ranks, placing them within a consistent and ordered clothing framework, an attempt achieved while more than one symptom was becoming evident of the existence of some cracks in the system of the hierarchy of appearances. From this point of view, Vecellio's volumes can also be read as an attempt to capture in pictures a vision of society which was starting to break-up. It is not by chance that after Vecellio this type of treatise on clothing started to decline.

3. The hierarchy of appearances starts to break down

During the 1500s the first signs of a change in the role of dress came to light. There are accounts which seem enlightening to me, ascribable for the main part to the very treatises, which show how the social hierarchy was faithfully reflected in the hierarchy of appearances; indeed, the writers in their very ambivalence bear witness to the transition under way. Vecellio, in his 1590 edition, admitted that "the matter of dress" was a difficult subject both to deal with, and especially, to define, because in a state of constant change.[57] In the later version, published in 1598, Vecellio warned his reader that "because women's dress is so subject to change and variation, more that the moon, it is not possible in a single description to include everything that could be said."[58]

The dialogue *La Raffaella* by Alessandro Piccolomini likewise reflects an ambivalent position, on the one hand an interest in change, while at the same time showing an inablility to set aside a reliance on the hierarchy of appearances. In this text an elderly woman advises a younger one on the importance of changing one's clothes often and "of having always fresh garments."[59] To the objection that this strategy of appearance would be very expensive and worthy of a "lady and a princess", the experienced Raffaella replies: "It would suit a princess, and important lady, to wear very fine brocades and embroider dresses with pearls, diamonds, rubies and other suchlike; whereas I, having this respect, have not spoken to you about anything richer than good fabric . . . Indeed, I mean according to one's possibility: those who can't afford everything, should do as much as possible, trying a little harder."[60] Baldassar Castiglione's work also reveals hints on the theme of change and the acceptance of innovation, criticizing the disappearance of old customs.[61] The question of change was a preoccupation, though without particular praise of it. It was Giuliano de' Medici who asked: "I would have you to shew us in what sorte the Courtier shoulde apparayle hymself, what kind of garment doeth beste become hym, and howe he shoulde fitte himselfe in all his garmentes aboute his bodye: beecause we see infinite varietie in it, and some are arayed after the Frenche facion, some after the Spanyshe attire, an other wyll seeme a Dutcheman. Neyther wante wee of them also that wil cloth themselves lyke Turkes: some weare beardes, other dooe not. Therefore it were a good deede in this varietie, to shewe howe a manne shoulde chouse oute the beste."[62] It was Messer Federico, not unaware of the dynamics of change and its effects, who answered him, observing how "the bringing up of these new facions maketh the first to appeere very grosse."[63] However, Federico's consideration went further when he maintained: "Since (as you saye) this custome is so variable, and Italians are so desirous to take up other mennes facions, I beleave every manne maye lawfullye apparaile himselfe at his pleasure."[64]

The existence of cyclical changes in taste in dress was already clearly perceived by Michel de Montaigne, who pointed it out clearly: "The fashion now in use makes them absolutely condemn the other two with so great resolution and so universal consent, that a man would think there was a certain kind of madness crept in amongst them, that infatuates their understandings to this strange degree. Now, seeing that our change of fashions is so prompt and sudden, that the inventions of all the tailors in the world cannot furnish out new whim-whams enow to feed our vanity withal, there will often be a necessity that the despised forms must again come in vogue, these immediately after fall into the same contempt."[65] Moreover, in the earlier, lighter short work in verse *Le doctrinal de court* by Pierre Michault (1522), the importance of changing one's clothes frequently is underlined: "*D'un autre point je vous veux avertir/ Qui se nomme variance en habit/ C'est à dire qu'il vous convient vestir/ Diversement et tous les jours guerpir/ vos vêtements puis bleu, puis blanc, puis bis.*"[66] The *Oxford English Dictionary,* 1568 edition, was on the same wavelength when it associated the term 'fashion' with the pressing changes in dress style.[67] The anonymous *The Gossiping Wives Complaints* was written some decades later, revealing the obsession of the times with innovation in fashion: "Two things I love, two usuall things they are:/ The firste, new-fashioned cloaths I love to wear, / Newe tires, newe ruffes; aye, and newe gestures too/ In all newe fashions I do love to goe./ The second thing I love is this, I weene/ To ride about to have those newe cloaths seene/."[68] Shakespeare himself, who in the other passages quoted seems to bend to the 'hierarchy of appearances', in his comedy *Much Ado About Nothing* (1600) could not help recognising the force of the new social phenomenon, even while ridiculing its excesses.[69]

However, what strikes us most in contemporary accounts is the agreement in opinions over the crisis of the hierarchy of appearances. Sir Thomas Smith's considerations in the dialogue *A Discourse of the Commonweal of this Realm of England* date back to the mid-sixteenth century, and he noted that "nowadays servingmen go more costly in apparel and look to fare more daintly than their masters were wont to do in times past;"[70] and again: "I know when a servingmen was content to go in a Kendal coat in summer and in frieze coat in winter and with a plain white hose made meet for his body . . . Now he will look to have at the least for summer a coat of the finest cloth that may he got for money and his hose of the finest kersey and that of some strange dye as Flanders dye or some French puke that a prince or a great lord can wear no finer if he wear cloth."[71] The indignant comments of English Puritan Phillip Stubbes, author of the treatise *Anatomie of the abuses in England,* are just as well known; in 1583 he wrote: "Now there is such a confuse mingle-mangle of apparell in Aligna[72] and such preposterous excesse thereof, as every one is permitted to flaunt it out in what apparell he lust himselfe, or can get by anie kind of meanes, so that it is verie hard to knowe who is noble, who is worshipfull, who is a gentleman, who is not . . . This is a great confusion and a general disorder."[73] Fynes Moryson himself spoke of "Babylonian confusion" and denounced the fact that all "goe apparelled like a gentleman."[74]

Considerations in a similar tone were expressed by authoritative observers of Spanish society, such as Sebastiàn de Covarrubias, a Spanish writer working in the second half of the sixteenth century.[75] His objections were echoed by

the Bishop of Limoges who was disgusted at the "vanity among the men of this land, who are puffed up with conceit so long as they are atken for nobles and can wear the habit and appearance of nobility."[76] The situation cannot have been very different in France, if during the early years of the 17th century Antoine de Montchrestien noted that "it is at presente impossible to distinguish men by their appearance. The shopkeeper dresses like a gentleman. Moreover who can fail to see that this conformity of apparel introduces corruption to our old discipline?"[77] Stefano Guazzo, author of the treatise *La civil conversazione*, published for the first time in 1574 in Italy—with a further 20 editions by the end of the century, and translated in France, England, Holland and Germany—condemned "indiscretion of some ignoble rich men, who are not ashamed to wear the clothes of the nobility and carry gilded arms, with other decorations which would only be fitting for knights . . . And things have gone so far beyond this license in many parts of Italy that, as regards both men and women, there is no distinction of their level, and you see that the farmworkers dare to compete in dress with the artisans, and the artisans with the merchants, and the merchants with the nobles."[78]

Although coming from very different backgrounds, the authors of these passages shared a general apprehension as to the untidiness and confusion reigning in society due to the spread of fashionable dress. Clothing had been a basic instrument of social identification and distinction; but if dress was a matter of choice, the social order itself would suffer serious consequences.[79]

Cities provided an essential environment for the game of fashion.[80] Its influence was not yet generalised. Yet the accounts point towards an increasing tendency to consume based on invention or the emulation of the style of life of the upper classes. How should this be interpreted? Is it exaggerated moaning by moralists suffering from nostalgia for the good old days, present throughout history, or the concerned expression of those aware of the symptoms of a dangerous change under way? The latter would seem to be the more accurate interpretation. Indeed, during the sixteenth century the indignant moral reprimands of increasing addiction to changing fashions seem particularly harsh and frequent, compared with previous centuries.[81] Furthermore, to judge from the increasing number of sumptuary laws enacted in the majority of European states between 1500 and 1600, over that period political power was committed to legal intervention with the aim of restoring order in the 'hierarchy of appearances'.[82] The preamble of the proclamation issued in 1588 in England by Elisabeth I is explicit, deploring "the confusion of degrees of all estates, amongst whom diversity of apparel hath been always a special and laudable mark."[83]

The 'turn of the screw' carried out by the authorities during the 1500s inevitably provoked reactions. Of significance in this regard is the anonymous protest sent to the governor against the regulation on luxury issued in Milan in 1565, in which the foundations of the hierarchy of appearances were challenged in indignant tones and incisive arguments: "If it is said it is decorous for a city the ability to distinguish by dress at first sight the commoners from the nobles and the greater nobles from the others, one might answer that this means nothing, and that if ambition could be removed there would be nobody to be found who would display this sort of decorum . . . ; furthermore that there was never a time of such unordered dressing in this city that in some way it was not pos-

sible to perceive the differing qualities of people; but indeed if there were not freedom of dress, it would be a good thing to introduce it if for no other reason than that men might have the motivation to be known one as being better than another not for their dress but for their virtuous acts; and it seems rather that the reputation of a city is diminished by the desire to have its nobles known by their finer dress compared with the commoners, as though nobility depends on clothes, or nobles know no other way of making themselves known."[84] The writer or writers of the memorial could have made use of a passage by Baldassar Castiglione who asserted that: "I woulde not sticke muche at this, for so a gentleman be of woorthinesse in other matters, his garmentes neyther encrease nor minishe reputation."[85]

Beyond the issue of dress and clothing regulations lay complex social tension, varying according to the regional context. But undoubtedly the 'attack' on the hierarchy of appearances was sparked by the increase in and spread of the propensity to consume clothing far beyond previous levels of consumption. This interpretation is supported by the results of the investigations carried out on post-mortem inventories, which led Anton Schuurman and Lorena Walsh to state that "since the sixteenth century, consumption seems to have been growing."[86] Around the middle of the sixteenth century, Sir Thomas Smith could not help noting the increasing interest on the part of the English for the wide variety of modish accessories which the ever-increasing number of London shops offered their clients. Smith noted the appetitie for "gloves . . . made in France or Spain; . . . kersey . . . of Flanders dye; . . . brooch, nor aglet, but of Venice making or Milan." He concluded that, "I have seen within these twenty years when there are were of these haberdashers that sell French or Milan caps, glasses, daggers, swords, girdles, swords, and such like, not a dozen in all London. And now, from the Tower to Westminster long, every street is full of them."[87] However, while it is true that the hierarchy of appearances was beginning to break down with the enhanced range of items available, it is not out of place to consider the economic conditions permitting these changes.

4. Economic conditions of change

The studies permitting us to tackle the issue of the evolution of purchasing power during the centuries of the modern age are primarily those involving wages and prices, and more especially, those focusing on the reconstruction of the dynamics of real wages, which, after a period of research going back to some decades ago,[88] have recently found renewed vigour, using new sources and adopting more accurate statistical techniques.[89] The information made available by these studies does not leave much room for interpretation: between the mid-16th century and the first half of the 1600s, there was a considerable decrease in real wages.[90] The phenomenon reveals variation in intensity according to geographical area and some ups and downs, but over a period of a century the trend in the purchasing power of wages seems to be characterised by a general tendency downwards, even though this trend was more serious in central and southern Europe and less serious in the area of the Low Countries.[91] It should be borne in mind, though, that research into the evolution of real wages, how-

ever careful, suffers from certain limitations, which must be considered when drawing conclusions. Above all it is important to underline that the construction of reliable and continuous historical series of prices and wages is limited by the availability of sources, to be found only in some areas, and the further back one goes in time, the rarer quantitative information becomes. Secondly, where it exists and is accessible, data on wages regards only some professional categories—mainly building workers, whose individual daily pay is known to us, but we have no knowledge of overall family income, which is essential if we want to have a clear idea of the real disposable income of each household.[92] Moreover, as regards the cost of consumer goods, to which nominal wages must be related in order to obtain an indicator of purchasing power, the putting together of a basket of goods truly representative of the patterns of consumption for very long periods of time seems a very hard task, the difficulties of which have induced researchers to adopt methodological expedients which may be technically refined but which run the risk of leading to results of doubtful reliability.[93] However, the historical series constructed by scholars, do reveal in their formulae, tables and graphs, that the sixteenth century did not experience a generalised increase in the tendency to consume supported by increasing real wages. This conclusion is apparently in contrast with the empirical evidence gathered by researchers studying the tendency to consume—the so-called "world of goods"—through analysis of probate inventories.[94] This difference in points of view is summed up effectively by Jan De Vries: "The historian who averts eye contact with the wage and price evidence just discussed and fixes his or her gaze firmly on what I will call 'direct evidence' of the world of goods will gain a very different—a decidedly optimistic—impression of the changing standard of living from the sixteenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century."[95] Of course, not even the studies on probate inventories are free of limitation, and interpretative prudence is in order. The criticisms that have been raised include the idea that these are generally sample studies, whose representativeness it is difficult to ascertain, and that the documentation used only gives stock data and not flow data, i.e. the description of goods possessed at a certain time without the opportunity to comprehend how that material wealth was formed and modified.[96]

In fact, the contrast between the results obtained by the two strands of research—that into real wages and that into material culture—is only an apparent contrast as regards the increase in the propensity to consume items of clothing which produced the 'attack' on the hierarchy of appearances, because it is reasonable to assume that the behaviour condemned in the accounts cited were the prerogative of those belonging to the wealthy classes, probably newly-rich, most likely citizens who aspired to gaining legitimate recognition of their belonging to a higher rung on the social ladder.[97] Indeed, the sixteenth century is described by history as being a period characterised by social mobility, especially intense in England,[98] but also to be found on the continent.[99] As Henry Kamen noted, the rise of the middle classes was an undisputable phenomenon in sixteenth century Europe. Those who succeeded in trade, through public office and on the land, were concerned with consolidating the advantages achieved by their class as regards both social status and political influence.[100] It could be observed that these 'emerging classes' did not want to destroy the hierarchy of appearances,

but merely to be included in it.[101] It cannot be excluded that in an early phase the tendency was of this kind, but I believe that the advent of fashion could even better serve the purpose of the need for showing off social rise: being 'fashionable' would become the distinctive criteria available to those with the means to afford it. From this point of view, of particular interest is the extraordinary manuscript known as the *Book of Costumes* by Matthäus Schwarz.[102] This is a manuscript drawn up between 1520 and 1550, in which Matthäus Schwarz, a member of the bourgeois class employed by the Fugger bankers, collected 137 illustrations showing him in the clothes worn during the various phases of his life.[103] Of the many interpretations this manuscript is open to one is without doubt that revealing Schwarz' effort to show what a large wardrobe he had, containing clothes which apart from being made of precious cloth, also testified to their owner's attention to the taste of the time and their suitability for the various moments of his social life:[104] the Fuggers' chief accountant wanted in this way to show that he could 'fittingly' aspire to being included in the circle of the city's elite.[105]

Therefore it is not among the building workers or the unskilled wage earners, busy at putting together lunch and dinner, that we should look for the protagonists of the challenge to the hierarchy of appearances criticised by indignant contemporaries, as Schuurman and Walsh themselves reveal: "From the sixteenth century onwards, material circumstances *among those not abjectly poor* appear to have gradually improved."[106] Richard Goldthwaite has used pertinent reasoning to illustrate the economic conditions which would support the increase in the propensity to consume of the wealthy classes in Renaissance Italy: the liquidity which would fuel 'consumerism' derived from the proceeds of business such as finance and especially land-owning,[107] which went side by side with or substituted traditional areas of activity in manufacturing and commerce. On the other hand, the decline, more or less marked, in the purchasing power of wages, eroded by the increasing cost of food in the 16th century, doubtlessly produced a worsening in the workers' standard of living, but did not necessarily determine a generalised reduction in the tendency to consume; indeed, the increase in the cost of agricultural goods could at the same time have caused a reduction of real income for wage earners and an increase in the income of wealthy social groups.[108] In the period between approximately 1500 and 1650 inequality between rich and poor rose considerably; while wage earners met with growing difficulty in the face of continually increasing prices of basic goods—food, housing, heating—which absorbed the whole of the family budget, the wealthy classes, those who derived their income from their land, could exploit both the increase in agricultural prices, and the simultaneous decrease in the cost of those goods and services comprising the so-called "conspicuous consumption", which drained considerable sums of their budget: furnishings, exotic goods, servants, and, of course, clothing.[109]

The very prices of the basic products used for making the many types of items of clothing, i.e. fabrics, showed a clear tendency to decrease during the seventeenth century. Carole Shammas has revealed how the phenomenon seemed to have started by the end of the sixteenth century, and was to become consolidated during the next.[110] While it is true that the cause of this trend seems to be

the decline in the wages of the workers of this sector,[111] it is also true that there is another explanation. Prices of fabric—and, more in general, of clothing—also decreased because producers expanded and diversified the supply, offering consumers products and clothing which were new and cheaper compared with the past. As Shammas writes, "Prices declined, and the popularity of thinner, less expensive fabrics . . . and in the eighteenth century ready-made garments, also brought the costs down."[112] Joan Thirsk, who has studied the English context in depth, concludes: "By the end of the sixteenth century goods that had been deemed rich men's luxuries in 1540 were being made in so many different qualities and at such varied prices that they came within the reach of every man."[113]

Indeed, we know that the European textile industry was ever more oriented towards the production of lighter-weight, cheaper fabrics than those traditionally used already by the late 1400s, and that this tendency was even stronger in the following century. Developments in this direction in the wool sector are well known; the ever-wider spread of cheap fabric is a typical feature of sixteenth-century production. Together with a growth in manufacturing oriented towards the production of lightweight fabrics during the middle ages, during the sixteenth century arose other production centres specialised in the production of new types of fabric.[114] Of traditional light-weight production, fabrics known as *baiette* (flannels), *saie* (twills) *sarze* (serges) were much appreciated.[115] As regards new fabrics, two main groups can be identified. On the one hand were fabrics made with wool thread, which were subdivided into fabrics, often called *rascie* (herringbone wool cloth), cloth with an iridescent finish (satins) imitating shot silk, and finally fabric woven using goat or camel hair. On the other hand were mixed fabrics, made with wool and other fibres such as cotton or linen.[116]

Perhaps less well-known, but equally important, is a similar tendency which emerged in the silk industry, where there also seems to have been an increase in the production of mixed fabrics, i.e. made with silk thread mixed with cheaper fibres, such as wool, linen, cotton or lower-quality silk; consumers could thus afford fabrics which copied the silk effect but which cost less than pure silk, top quality cloth. The most well-known example is perhaps that of the so-called brocatel,[117] the production of which grew up in Venice and many Italian and European silk centres during the sixteenth century,[118] but as well as this, other fabrics known as *buratti, canevazze, cosacchi, dobloni, ferandine, rasetti, tabì* were also produced.[119]

In the velvet industry too production techniques aimed at reducing costs were adopted, presumably with an effect on the final cost of the product. Among the techniques adopted was the reduction in the size of decorative motifs on velvet for clothing; this 'miniaturisation' of the pattern permitted a simpler and quicker adjustment of the loom when moving from one type of weave to another, which permitted a reduction in production time and cost, as well as greater productive flexibility. Another technique used with the aim of reducing the cost of production and introduced as of the second half of the century, was that of reproducing on plain velvet the effect of damask by means of pressure- and heat-treating the fabric.[120]

Another important change in the supply of clothing which took place during the 16th century is what we might call 'the knitting revolution', i.e. the

advent and spread of knitted articles of clothing which gradually took the place of clothes traditionally made of woven cloth. The best-known example is that of knitted hosiery, the first example of a ready-to-wear item of clothing, which could be bought and worn without having to rely on a tailor's skill as was the case with the traditional cloth hosiery, presumably with lower product costs.[121] Probably as a result of the success of knitted hosiery, the introduction of the knitting frame, invented by the Englishman William Lee also goes back to the end of the 16th century.[122]

This discussion of knitwear leads us on to consider the earliest examples of affordable ready-made clothes of the time. The best-known example of ready-made clothing is of course second-hand clothing. The second-hand clothes market, flourishing in all the big cities as of at least the sixteenth century, offered the chance to buy a wide variety of items of clothing. Second-hand clothes could be bought from specialised dealers or at auctions,[123] as Philip Stubbes observed about 1600 for London.[124] Recent studies have also shown that in some continental cities the sale of specially-made ready-to-wear clothing was already established by about 1600; at Ghent and Antwerp, for example, the sale of ready-to-wear items was handled by second-hand dealers, who commissioned the garments from the city tailors.[125] Finally, it should be borne in mind that the consumers of the time could also exploit a less expensive option than buying: that of hiring garments for going to particular events.[126]

The empirical evidence examined seems to fit into a consistent framework. The constant and profitable research for innovative products, and, to a lesser extent, processes, which were a feature of the textile and clothing industry of the sixteenth century was distinguished by a basic objective: to expand and diversify supply with ever-cheaper products, with the aim of reaching a wider audience of consumers. This strategy led to a reduction in quality and in the life of the goods produced, but increased productive flexibility and expanded variety with the purpose of interacting more flexibly with a demand structure which was becoming ever more complex.

That which has been explained and discussed here does not by any means lead us to date back to the sixteenth century the so-called "consumer revolution"; however the examples considered show how, at least in the most important European cities, there were real opportunities to have access to a wide range of options as regards clothing, much increased if compared with the past. As has been said, however, these opportunities were restricted to the higher classes and it is probable that the possibility to take part in the 'game of fashion' was extended to other social groups only during the 17th century, when purchasing power started to increase considerably and widely, simultaneously with what Jan De Vries has called "industrious revolution"[127] . However, it seems important to me to underline the fact that the mechanism of change had already got under way by the 1500s, even though it became consolidated later. The traditional 'hierarchy of appearances' went into crisis for a number of reasons: the difficulty of enforcing the sumptuary laws,[128] the pressure from social classes wanting to move upwards, the new opportunities afforded by the clothing market. The system based on a rigid normative code—the sumptuary laws—was replaced by a social institution, by rules no less strict—fashion—which did not cease to at-

tribute significance of representation and identification to clothing, but carried out this role much more flexibly and, at the same time, more effectively.[129]

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ENDNOTES

The author would like the thank Beverly Lemire for her help on this paper.

1. On the distinction between fashion and costume, see René König, *Menscheit auf dem Laufsteg. Die Mode in Zivilizationprocess* (Munchen-Wien, 1985). See also: Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing. Dress and Fashion in the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge, 1996), 44–66; Daniel Roche, *A History of Everyday Things : the Birth of Consumption in France*, (Cambridge, 2000), 193–220.

2. This point of view is put forward strongly by Gilles Lipovetsky, *L'empire de l'éphèmere. La mode et son destin dans les sociétés modernes* (Paris, 1987), 25–28, according to whom fashion is a typical feature of modern western societies.

3. For a summary of the various postions within social sciences, see the neat sythesis by Yuniya Kawamura, *Fashion-ology. An Introduction to Fashion Studies* (Oxford and New York, 2005). More generally on the definition of social institutions see Richard W. Scott, *Institutions and Organizations* (Thousands Oaks-London-New Delhi, 1995). On the effect of social institutions in a historical perspective see Duglass C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (Cambridge, 1990).

4. Richard A. Posner, "Social Norms and the Law: An Economic Approach," *American Economic Review* 87 (1997): 365–369.

5. According to Georg Simmel, the dynamic of change expressed through fashion is fed by the interaction between imitation and distinction, which implies that there must be no institutional conditioning of the possibility to "imitate". Georg Simmel, *Die Mode* (Berlin, 1905).

6. Mary S. Newton, *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince. A study of the years 1340–1365,* (Woolbridge, 1980). The theory has been taken up by other authors: see for example Valerie Steele, *Paris Fashion. A Cultural History* (Oxford and New York, 1999), 15–18 and Elisabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams. Fashion and Modernity* (New Brunswick and New Jersey, 2003), 18–20.

7. Aileen Ribeiro, *Dress and Morality* (Oxford and New York, 2003), 46–50.

8. Ribeiro, *Dress and Morality,* 44–47.

9. A more cautious position is taken by Ribeiro, *Dress and Morality,* 42–43.

10. Cristopher Breward, *The Culture of Fashion. A New History of Fashionable Dress* (Manchester and New York, 1995), 25–28; Ribeiro, *Dress and Morality,* 45–49.

11. Breward holds that the testimonies cited "illustrate the wide varieties of style, cut and color available to ordinary men of reasonable means after the 1350s and give the lie to histories of dress which conveniently compartimentalise medieval costume according to social caste" (Breward, *The culture of fashion,* 28). The reasoning is interesting but not sufficiently proved.

12. According to investigations into the history of wages, the dynamic of some types of income would seem to be shifting during the second half of the 14th century, especially as a result of the reduced population, but even using possibly unreliable data it is difficult to evaluate to what extent this evolution resulted in a greater consumption of clothing. See Robert C. Allen, "The Great Divergence in European Wages and Prices from the Middle Ages to the First World War," *Explorations in Economic History* 38 (2003) : 411–447.

13. Alan Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions. A History of Sumptuary Law* (London and New York, 1996), 26–33; Ribeiro, *Dress and Morality,* pp. 46–47.

14. Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions,* 149.

15. Simmel, *Die Mode.*

16. William Shakespeare, *The Life and Death of Julius Cesar,* Act I, Scene I.

17. As regards considerations on dress in treatises on behaviour, see Elisabeth Currie, "Prescribing Fashion: Dress, Politics and Gender in Sixteenth-Century Italian Conduct Literature," *Fashion Theory* 4 (2000): 157–178.

18. *Galateo,* which was first published in 1559, went through tens of editions and translations during the 16th century (Currie, "Prescribing Fashion:" 158).

19. Giovanni Della Casa, *Galateo* (Milan, 1559); modern edition by Claudio Milanini, *Galateo* (Milan, 2000), 128.

20. Author of the work *Conservaciòn de monarquìas* published in 1626, quoted by Antonio Alvarez-Ossorio Alvarino, "Rango y aparencia. El decoro y la quiebra de la distinciòn en Castilla (siglos XVI–XVIII)", *Revista de Historia Moderna* (1998–99): 266.

21. Michel De Montaigne, *Essais* (Paris, 1595), 133 (First edition Bordeaux, 1580).

22. First published in 1528.

23. Baldassar Castiglione, *Il cortegiano,* Venice, 1528; modern edition by Nicola Longo, *Il Libro del Cortegiano* (Milan, 2000), 160. The english translation of the quotations from *Il Libro del Cortegiano* are taken from the translation by Thomas Holby (1561), edited by Walter Raleigh (London, 1900), and available on line thanks to Richard Bear at http://www.uoregon.edu/ rbear/courtier/courtier.html.

24. Castiglione, *Il Libro del Cortegiano,* 158.

25. Della Casa, *Galateo,* 70.

26. Castiglione, *Il Libro del Cortegiano,* 158–159.

27. William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark,* Act I, Scene III.

28. Jo A. Olian, "Sixteenth-Century Costume Books," *Dress,* (1977): 20–48; Ann R. Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge, 2000), 5–6; Kristen I. Grimes, "Dressing the World: Costume Books and Ornamental Cartography in the Age of Exploration," in Elizabeth Rodini and Elissa B. Weaver (editors), *A Well Fashioned Image. Clothing and Costume in European Art, 1500–1850* (Chicago, 2002), 13–21; Isabelle Paresys, "Apparences vestimentaires et cartographie de l'espace en Europe Occidentale aux XVIe et XVIIe siécles," in Isabelle Paresys (éditeur), *Paraître et apparences en Europe Occidentale du Moyen Age à nos jours,* (Villeneuve d'Ascq, 2008), 253–270.

29. Quoted in Philippe Braunstein, *Un banquier mis à nu* (Paris, 1992), 107.

30. 1590 edition, entitled *De gli habiti antichi et moderni di diverse parti del mondo;* the following edition, which appeared in 1598, was called *Habiti antichi e moderni di tutto il mondo.*

31. On Vecellio's work see Olian, "Sixteenth-Century Costume Books:" 20–48; Grimes, "Dressing the World," 15–18; Eugenia Paulicelli, "Geografia ndel vestire tra vecchio e nuovo mondo nel libro di costumi di Cesare Vecellio," in Eugenia Paulicelli (editor), *Moda e moderno* (Rome, 2006), 128–153; Eugenia Paulicelli, "Mapping the World: The Political Geography of Dress in Cesare Vecellio's Costume Books," *The Italianist* 28 (2008): 24–53.

32. Vecellio, *Habiti antichi e moderni.*

33. Vecellio, *Habiti antichi e moderni,* 14.

34. Vecellio, *Habiti antichi e moderni,* 15.

35. As regards this awareness see Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing,* 5.

36. Della Casa, *Galateo,* 127.

37. Michel Pastoureau, *The Devil's Cloth: a History of Stripes* (New York, 2001).

38. Michel Pastoureau, *Blue. The History of a Color* (Princeton, 2001).

39. John Harvey, *Men in Black* (Chicago, 1995), 52–55. See also Michel Pastoureau, *Black. The History of a Color* (Princeton, 2008).

40. Harvey, *Men in Black,* 71–92.

41. Castiglione, *Il Libro del Cortegiano,* 159. A similar suggestion was made by Sabba da Castiglione in his *Ricordi,* published in 1559 (Currie, *Prescribing Fashion:* 167).

42. Harvey, *Men in Black,* 71–82.

43. On the succession of colours and black in Dutch clothing in the 16th century see Thera Wijsenbeek-Olthuis, *The portrait as a mirror of society. The political significance of portraits in The Hague during the 17th century,* mimeo.

44. Harvey, *Men in Black,* 52–55 and 71–92.

45. Quoted in Currie, "Prescribing Fashion:" 161 and 173.

46. Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions,* 29 and 33.

47. Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions,* 325–356; Catherine Kovesi Killerby, "Practical Problems in the Enforcement of Italian Sumptuary Laws, 1200–1500," in Trevor Dean and Katherine J.P. Lowe (editors), *Crime, Society and the Law in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, 1994), 99–120.

48. Claudio Donati, *L'idea di nobiltà in Italia. Secoli XIV–XVIII* (Rome-Bari, 1988), 129; Breward, *The culture of fashion,* 55. See also Diane Owen Hughes, "Sumptuary Laws and Social Relations in Renaissance Italy," in John Bossy (editor), *Disputes and Settlements: Law and Human Relations in the West* (Cambridge, 1983), 69–99.

49. Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions,* 28–38.

50. Quoted in Alessandro Luzio, "La Prammatica del Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga contro il lusso," in *Miscellanea Renier,* Turin, 1913, 75. See also Donati, *L'idea di nobiltà in Italia,* 128–136.

51. Donati, *L'idea di nobiltà in Italia,* 135–136. See for instance the argument provided by a law passed by the governement of Milan in 1580: "The many abuses which over recent years have been introduced and which have now reached a limit . . . as regards extravagance in citizens' dress and other expenses made in public, which are so uncontrolled and abusive that bring troubles whith many families, and now there is damage and ruin everywhere." (Quoted in Paola Venturelli, *Vestire e apparire. Il sistema vestimentario femminile nella Milano spagnola (1539–1679)* (Rome, 1999), 128)

52. Quoted in Guido Guerzoni, "Liberalitas, Magnificentia, Splendor. Le origini classiche del fasto rinascimentale italiano," *Cheiron* (1999): 77–78.

53. Montaigne, *Essais,* 172.

54. Montaigne, *Essais,* 172.

55. Montaigne, *Essais,* 172 .

56. Donati, *L'idea di nobiltà in Italia,* 136.

57. Paulicelli, "Geografia del vestire", 129.

58. Vecellio, *Habiti antichi e moderni,* 109.

59. Alessandro Piccolomini, *La Raffaella ovvero dialogo della bella creanza delle donne,* Venezia, 1539; modern edition by Guido Alfano, *La Raffaella ovvero dialogo della bella creanza delle donne* (Rome, 2001), 49.

60. Piccolomini, *La Raffaella ovvero dialogo della bella creanza delle donne,* 49–50.

61. "Therefore when our olde men praise the Courtes of times past because there were not in them so vitious men, as some that are in oures, they doe not knowe that there were not also in them so vertuous men, as some that are in oures . . . Again these olde men discommende many thynges in us, which of themselves are neyther good nor badde, onelye because they did them not: and say it is no good sight to see yonge men on horsebacke aboute the stretes and especially upon Mules, nor to wear furres, nor syde garmentes in winter, nor to weare a cappe before a man be a the least xviii. yeares of age, and such

other matters, wherin truly they be much deceyved. For these facions (beside that they be commodious and profitable) are brought up by custome, and generallye men delite in them, as at that time they were contented to goe in their jacket, in their breechlesse hose and in their lowe shoes with lachettes, and (to appeere fine) carye all day longe a hauke upon their fiste, without pourpose, and daunce without touching a womans hand, and used many other facions, the which as they are nowe stale, so were they at that time muche set by. Therefore may it be lawfull for us also to followe the custome of our times, without controulment of these olde men." (Castiglione, *Il Libro del Cortegiano,* 122–123.)

62. Castiglione, *Il Libro del Cortegiano,* 157.

63. Castiglione, *Il Libro del Cortegiano,* 158.

64. Castiglione, *Il Libro del Cortegiano,* 157–158.

65. Montaigne, *Essais,* 189.

66. Quoted in Abigail S. Lang (éditeur), *Mode et contre-mode* (Paris, 2001), 65.

67. Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing,* 1.

68. Quoted in Colin Mc Dowell (editor), *The Pimlico Companion to Fashion* (London, 1998), 144.

69. William Shakespeare, *Much Ado about Nothing,* Act III, Scene III.

70. Quoted in Mary Dewar (editor), *A Discourse of the Commonweal of this Realm of England attributed to Sir Thomas Smith* (Charlottesville, 1969), 81.

71. Quoted in Dewar (editor), *A Discourse of the Commonweal,* 81–82.

72. England.

73. Philip Stubbes, *Anatomie of abuses* (London,1583); critical edition by di Frederick J. Furnivall, *Philip Stubbes's Anatomy of the Abuses in England,* (London, 1877–1879), part I, 34.

74. Quoted in Diana de Marly, *Working dress. A history of occupational clothing* (London, 1986), p. 24. According to Christopher Breward "In a sense, then, fashion and fashionable appearance, rather than revealing signals of rank and region in a literal manner as had been formerly the case, tendend in the late sixteenth century towards a perverse form of concealment, designed with the intricacy of a puzzle ... Distinction in the appearance of male and female, mistress and servant, townsman and country dweller, old and young was by no means straightforward or translucent" (Breward, *The culture of fashion,* 61).

75. Alvarez-Ossorio Alvarino, *Rango y aparencia:* 272.

76. Quoted in Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, 1995), II, 733.

77. Quoted in Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* , II, 733.

78. Stefano Guazzo, *La civil conversatione,* Brescia, 1574; modern edition by Amedeo Quondam, *La civil conversazione* (Modena, 1993), I, 140.

79. On the topic of recognition see Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions,* pp. 108–141. With reference to the English context, see also David Kuchta, *The Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity. England, 1550–1850* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, 2002), 50.

80. On the significance of towns in the growth of new models of consumption see Richard Goldthwaite, *Wealth and the Demand for Art in Italy 1300–1600* (Baltimore-London, 1993), 40–62.

81. Ribeiro, *Dress and Morality,* 59.

82. Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions,* 29–33. "Earlier in the 1560s there is evidence to suggest that the concerns of moralists, churchmen and bureaucrats were being taken seriously enough to instigate actual enforcement of the usually ignored sumptuary proclamation" (Breward, *The culture of fashion,* 55).

83. Susan Vincent, *Dressing the élite. Clothes in Early Modern England* (Oxford and New York, 2003), 125. See also Kuchta, *The Three-Piece-Suit,* 34–38.

84. Quoted in Donati, *L'idea di nobiltà,* 135.

85. Castiglione, *Il Libro del Cortigiano,* 159.

86. Anton J. Schuurman and Lorena S. Walsh, *Introduction,* in Aanton J. Schuurman and Lorena S. Walsh (editors), *Material culture: consumption, life-style, standard of living, 1500–1900* (Milan, 1994), 14. As for the following period see Woodruff Smith, *Consumption and the Making of Respectability, 1600–1880* (New York and London, 2002), 5–24. A recent survey has been provided by Peter Stearns, *Consumerism in World History* (London and New York, 2001), 1–36.

87. Quoted in Dewar (editor), *A Discourse of the Commonweal,* p. 64.

88. For a summary see Jan De Vries, "Between purchasing power and the world of goods: understanding the household economy in early modern Europe," in John Brewer and Roy Porter (editors), *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London and New York, 1993), 85–131.

89. See Allen, "The Great Divergence in European Wages and Prices from the Middle Ages to the First World War:" 411–447. See also the papers collected in Robert C. Allen, Tommy Bengtsson and Martin Dribe (editors), *Living Standards in the Past. New Perspectives on Well-Being in Asia and Europe* (Oxford, 2005).

90. Allen, "The Great Divergence," 441–447.

91. Allen, "The Great Divergence," 427–243.

92. "Moreover, the wage rates of men alone tell us nothing about the earnings of families. It was the wages earned by wives and children, added to that of their husbands, which most impressed economic writers and prompted their praise for new consumer occupations." (Joan Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Project. The Development of a Consumer Society in Early Modern England* [Oxford, 1988], 173–174).

93. De Vries, "Between purchasing power," 95–98.

94. On the propensity to consume in the Renaissance see Goldthwaite's classic, *Wealth and the Demand for Art in Italy*. See also Lisa Jardine, *Wordly Goods* (New York, 1996) and the recent Evelyn Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance. Consumer Cultures in Italy 1400–1600* (New Haven and London, 2005).

95. De Vries, "Between purchasing power," 98.

96. De Vries, "Between purchasing power," 98.

97. Cfr. De Vries, "Between purchasing power," 106. See also Owen Hughes, *Sumptuary Laws and Social Relations*, 98–99.

98. Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558–1641* (Oxford, 1965); Lawrence Stone, *Social mobility in England, 1500–1700*, "Past and Present" 33 (1966): 16–55.

99. See the classics Helmut G. Koenigsberger, George L. Mosse and Gerry Bowler, *Europe in the Sixteenth century* (Harlow, 1989), 28–44; Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, II, 704–733; Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th century. The Wheels of Commerce* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, 1992), 458–513; Henry Kamen, *Early Modern European Society* (London and New York, 1999), 70–119. More recent analysis of the european economic trend in the early modern period are provided, among others, by Jan L. Van Zanden, "Early Modern Economic Growth, A Survey of the European Economy, 1500–1800," in Marten Prak (editor), *Early Modern Capitalism. Economic and Social Change in Europe 1400–1800* (London and New York, 2001), 69–87 and Robert C. Allen, "Progress and Poverty in Early Modern Europe," *Economic History Review*, 56 (2004): 403–443.

100. Kamen, *Early Modern European Society*, 97–119.

101. According to Alan Hunt, "Style wars are class wars; they are made up of battles over dress, fashion and appearance" (Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions*, 143).

102. Copies of the *Klaydungsbüchling* manuscript are held at the Herzog-Anton-Ulrich Museum in Brunswick and the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris.

103. See August Fink, *Die Schwarzschen Trachtenbücher* (Berlin, 1963) and the more recent Braunstein, *Un banquier mis à nu*.

104. To give just a few examples, the accountant of Hapsburg had himself drawn in the clothes worn respectively in Milan on Francis I's arrival, to go hunting with the gentlemen of his city, for a ball given by the Emperor Maximillian, for an archery competition, for meeting the Archduke of Austria Ferdinand, for a procession, for a military review (Braunstein, *Un banquier mis à nu*). Schwarz also seems aware of the need—advised by many treatise-writers—to adapt one's clothing to local custom; in memory of a visit to Venice in 1516 he had himself drawn wearing the long black gown of the Venetian patricians, "*a la zentilhomo*" as he himself noted (Braunstein, *Un banquier mis à nu*, 25).

105. Gabriele Mentges, "Fashion, Time and the Consumption of a Renaissance Man in Germany: the Costume Book of Matthäus Schwarz of Augsburg, 1496–1564," *Gender and History* 14 (2002): 382–402 and 386–391.

106. Schuurman and Walsh, *Introduction*, 14.

107. Goldthwaite, *Wealth and the Demand,* 40–62.

108. Philip T. Hoffman, David S. Jacks, Patricia A. Levin and Peter H. Lindert, "Sketching the Rise of Real Inequality in Early Modern Europe," in Allen, Bengtsson and Dribe (editors), *Living Standards in the Past,* 131–165, 131–165.

109. Hoffman, Jacks, Levin and Lindert, "Sketching the Rise of Real Inequality in Early Modern Europe," 164–165.

110. Carole Shammas, "Changes in English and Anglo-American Consumption from 1550 to 1800," in Brewer and Porter (editors), *Consumption and the World of Goods,* 177–205; Carole Shammas, "The Decline of Textile Prices in England and British America Prior to Industrialization," *Economic History Review* 47 (1994): 483–507.

111. Shammas, "The Decline of Textile Prices:" 504–505.

112. Shammas, "Changes in English and Anglo-American Consumption," 193–194.

113. Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects,* 179.

114. Hermann Van Der Wee, "The Western European Woollen Industries, 1500–1750," in David Jenkins (editor), *The Cambridge History of Western Textiles* (Cambridge, 2003), I, 428–452.

115. Van Der Wee, "The Western European Woollen Industries," 439.

116. Van Der Wee, "The Western European Woollen Industries," 434–435.

117. It was mainly used for furnishings (Roberta Orsi Landini, "Da vanità a virtù: l'innovazione come valor e aggiunto all'oigine della produzione tessile per l'abbigliamento," in Paulicelli (editor), *Moda e moderno,* 74), but, according to Cesare Vecellio, it was employed also for dress: Vecellio, *Habiti antichi e moderni,* 107 ("*Cortegiane fuor di casa*"), 168 ("*Un altro habito dello stato di Milano*"), 217 ("*Matrona napolitana moderna*") .

118. At the time the Italian silk industry was dominant in Europe: see Francesco Battistini, *L'industria della seta in Italia nell'età moderna* (Bologna, 2003), 176–184.

119. Luca Molà, *The Silk Industry of Renaissance Venice* (Baltimore and London, 2000), 170–184.

120. Roberta Orsi Landini, "All'origine della produzione moderna: il differenziarsi della produzione per abbigliamento e arredamento nei velluti fra Cinque e Seicento," in Museo Poldi Pezzoli, *Velluti e moda tra XV e XVIII secolo* (Milan, 1999), 17–22; Roberta Orsi Landini, "Il velluto da abbigliamento. Il rinnovamento del disegno, in Museo Poldi Pezzoli, *Velluti e moda,* 57–72; Roberta Orsi Landini," Il rinnovamento delle tecniche," in Museo Poldi Pezzoli, *Velluti e moda,* 73–90; Roberta Orsi Landini, "Apparire, non essere: l'imperativo del risparmio," in Museo Poldi Pezzoli, *Velluti e moda,* 91–104; Orsi Landini, "Da vanità a virtù," 57–78.

121. Stanley D.Chapman, *Hosiery and Knitwear* (Oxford, 2002); Carlo M. Belfanti, *Calze e maglie* (Mantua, 2005).

122. Chapman, *Hosiery and Knitwear;* Belfanti, *Calze e maglie*.

123. Bianca M. Du Mortier, "Introduction into the used-clothing market in the Netherlands," in *Per una storia della moda pronta* (Florence, 1991), 117–125; Jutta Zander Seidel, "Ready-to-wear clothing in Germany in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: new ready-made garments and second-hand clothes," in *Per una storia della moda pronta*, 9–16; Harald Deceulaer, "Guildsmen, Entrepreneurs and Market Segments: The Case of the Garment Trades in Antwerp and Ghent (Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries)," *International Review of Social History* 43 (1998): 1–29; Patricia A. Allerston, "Reconstructing the second-hand clothes trade in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Venice," *Costume* 33 (1999): 46–56; Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, 17–33.

124. Stubbes, *The Anatomie of abuses*, part. II, 39–40.

125. Deceulaer, *Guildsmen, Entrepreneurs and Market Segments:* 6–9.

126. Patricia A. Allerston, "Clothing and early modern Venetian society," *Continuity and Change* 15 (2000): 367–390.

127. Jan De Vries, "The Industrial Revolution and the Industrious Revolution," *The Journal of Economic History*, 54, 1994, 249–270; Jan De Vries, *The Industrious Revolution. Consumer Behavior and the Household Economy, 1650 to the Present* (Cambridge, 2008).

128. See Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions*, 325–356.

129. See Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, 45–63.